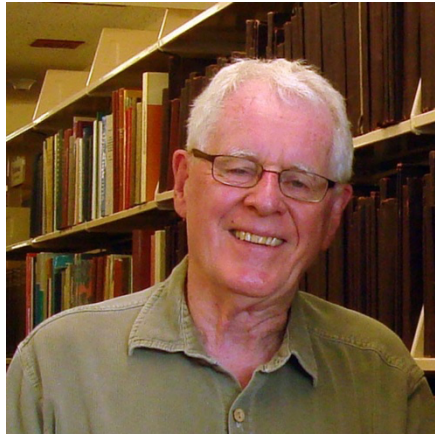
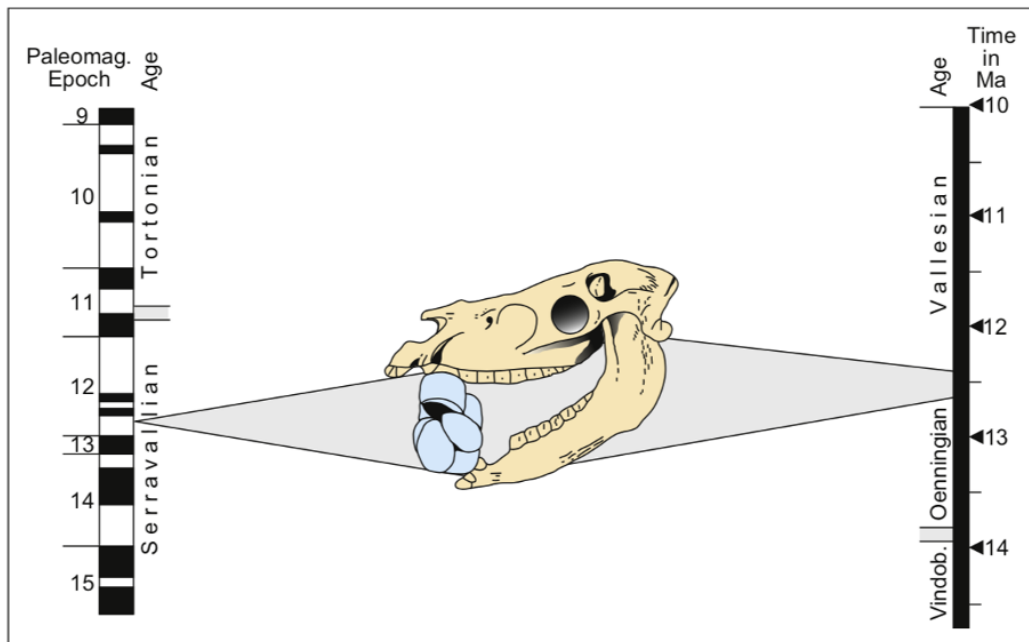


## A Tribute to our Friend and Colleague John A. Van Couvering (1931-2023)



As this month of May comes to an end, the SNS remembers with gratitude and kindness our friend and colleague John Anthony Van Couvering who passed away a year ago. His love of Nature combined with his passion for Vertebrate Paleontology and a broad academic and practical geological expertise led him to become a highly esteemed leader in chronostratigraphic thinking which he developed mostly from Neogene studies and applicable to the whole geological column. From these, and in collaboration with William A. Berggren, came in the 1970's the emphasis on marine—continental correlations and the means to achieve them through the integration of unrelated but complementary datasets. Fifty years later, the procedure remains fundamental to building frameworks of correlative stratigraphies around the world. The pregnant concepts of FAD and LAD (First and Last Appearance of taxa) embodied in John's symbolic cartoon of *Hipparion*, the Miocene horse, holding between his jaw *Globigerina nepenthes*, a planktonic foraminifera, became integral to the procedure, providing the means of communication between geological disciplines especially in paleoceanography.



A long-time Editor-in-Chief and then Director of the Micropaleontology Press, John was a valued member of the SNS. He was involved in the definition of the Pleistocene Series and Calabrian Stage, and of the Zanclean GSSP. He was engaged in the controversial inclusion of the Quaternary Period at the expense of the Neogene, and he wholeheartedly joined the effort for restoring harmony in Cenozoic chronostratigraphy through formal definition of its subseries. Above all, he encouraged respect of rules and principles for chronostratigraphic objectivity, stability and credibility. With John's passing, SNS has lost a committed member who, at the age of 91, driven by passion for Earth history, was still eagerly writing on the Neogene.

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Sources:

John's photo credit [https://www.micropress.org/J\\_Van\\_Couvering\\_Obituary.html](https://www.micropress.org/J_Van_Couvering_Obituary.html)

*G. nepenthes* in *Hipparion*'s mouth (attached; credit Berggren, W.A. and van Couvering, J.A. (1974) The Late Neogene: Biostratigraphy, Geochronology and Paleoclimatology of the Last 15 Million Years in Marine and Continental Sequences. *Palaeogeogr, Palaeoclimatol, Palaeoecol*, 16, 1-216. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/palaeogeography-palaeoclimatology-palaeoecology/vol/16/issue/1>

Extensive information on John's scientific contribution and life may be found at <http://doi.org/10.47894/mpal.70.1.01> (with complete list of publications) and <https://doi.org/10.61551/gsjfr.53.4.403>